

9 July 1964

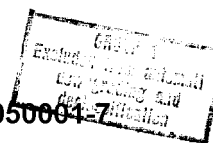
MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Cyprus

1. Both Athens and the Greek Cypriots appear to be increasingly acting on the assumption that the battle is virtually won and that they will emerge victorious. Athens and those Greek Cypriots who favor enosis appear to be following a two-pronged strategy of building up their forces on Cyprus (1) to establish control over President Makarios and to ensure the eventual triumph of enosis -- which they doubt Makarios really supports -- and (2) to be sufficiently strong to contain any Turkish invasion of the island until UN and Western intervention might stop the conflict.

2. The return of Greek resistance leader Grivas on 12 June was followed almost immediately by a large influx of personnel from Greece. This inflow of some 5,000 to 7,000 men includes some Greek Cypriot students trained by the Greek military. However, most of them apparently are regular Greek troops, including at least one artillery unit and possibly an

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armored unit. Whatever the exact mixture of these forces, however, it is clear that the Greeks have been engaging in a de facto intervention on Cyprus.

3. This inflow from Greece increases the already overwhelming Greek Cypriot military superiority over the Turkish Cypriots. (The Turks [redacted] on the island, [redacted] total -- perhaps 1,500, including the Turkish contingent -- is far less than the Greek forces.) More important, in time this Greek military intervention -- combined with the Greek Cypriot buildup -- could significantly affect the ability of the Turks to carry out a successful military invasion from Turkey. Up to now the Turks in agreeing to postpone their intervention have taken solace in their capability to seize the island at will. Any change in this comforting appraisal would almost certainly revive pressures inside Turkey to reconsider military action "before it is too late."

4. Two other factors are also increasing the dangers involved. Makarios has threatened to stop all supplies from reaching the Turkish contingent on the island, and Ankara has indicated that if necessary the contingent will use force to keep its supply lines open. In addition, the Turks are claiming

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that the Greeks are carrying out a military buildup on Rhodes, which has been desilitarized by international treaty. So far, our evidence does not support these claims, but to the extent that the Turks believe them, tension between Greece and Turkey will further increase.

5. There are powerful forces in Turkey which are putting heavy pressure on Inonu's minority government to intervene, and this pressure is almost certain to increase when the full impact of Greece's de facto intervention is felt. The press and radio have played the themes of Greek Cypriot barbarism and Turkish humiliation for months, and popular opinion is clearly inflamed. Opposition political parties are constantly criticizing the government for its "weak" Cyprus policy and -- though they have little desire to assume the responsibilities of office at this time -- their criticisms considerably limit the government's freedom of maneuver. More important, large sections of the Turkish military and civil service feel that military intervention is the only way to protect Turkish interests and honor, as well as the rights of Turkish Cypriots. In short, the government would have virtually unanimous support if it intervened militarily, and may in any case be forced to do so or be swept aside. In the latter case, a successor government would be more likely to intervene.

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6. However, Turkey's top political and military leaders are aware of the fact that any unilateral military intervention would involve dangerous and damaging consequences for them. They know that many Turkish and Turkish Cypriot lives would be lost, and that the vast majority of UN members would oppose such action. They are well aware that such an intervention would not solve the Cyprus problem, though it would put them in a better bargaining position to gain an acceptable settlement. Though they almost certainly feel that their legal right to intervene on Cyprus is recognized by the US and UK, they probably realize that the US in particular would go to great lengths to halt the intervention by non-military means.

7. With patriotic emotion high on both sides and considerations of national prestige to the fore, rational judgments will not necessarily be controlling. As matters now stand we put the chances of Turkish intervention at something less than 50-50. (These are still soberingly high considering what is at stake.) But time and circumstance can raise these odds or lower them. For example, the odds would rise if Greek or Greek Cypriot forces were to attack Turkish Cypriot positions, and would rise further in the event of harassment or attack on the Turkish contingent. Even absent such military action, the

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odds would go up perhaps equally high if Grivas engineered a coup which overthrew Makarios and proclaimed the island's union with Greece.

8. Barring such dramatic events, we think that the chances of a Turkish intervention are considerably less than even for the next several weeks. Turkey is unlikely to take any such drastic step until it tests the extent to which the Greeks are willing to negotiate seriously at Geneva. While not optimistic, the Turks probably will be restrained as long as they feel there is any significant chance of reaching an agreed settlement. If they decide such agreement is impossible the chances of Turkish military intervention would increase rapidly.

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